

In cooperation with:



Idaho Water
Resource Board

&



Henry's Fork
Watershed Council

Henry's Fork Basin Study

Meeting Summary

May 19, 2011

Meeting date: May 17, 2011

Summary prepared by: Mark Bransom/CH2M HILL

Introduction

The Bureau of Reclamation requested that an interim meeting be held independent of the larger Stakeholder Workgroup meetings to informally discuss the Henry's Fork Basin Study (Study). Meeting attendees included several members that participated in the first interim meeting on May 3 and are listed at the end of this summary.

Bob Schattin/Reclamation opened the meeting by summarizing the current status of the Study and presented the agenda which includes the following:

- Review of the May 3, 2011 Meeting Summary
- Debrief of other interim meetings (May 16, 2011 Meeting #1 with Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) & May 16, 2011 Meeting #2 with Development and Municipal entities)
- Review current list of potential water supply alternatives
- Continue alternatives brainstorming
- Where are we in the Study process – Alternatives development
- Overview of the Stakeholder Workgroup meeting process and schedule

Interim Meetings Status Update and Debrief

Bob continued the discussion by providing a debrief of the May 16, 2011 Meeting #1 with IDFG and Meeting #2 with development and planning and municipal entities. The following issues and considerations from both meetings were noted (see May 16, 2011 Meeting Summaries #1 and #2 for complete notes):

Meeting #1 (IDFG):

- Focus should be given to Yellowstone cutthroat trout (YCT) as they may be petitioned again to be listed under the Environmental Species Act (ESA)
- Areas that would have the least impact on YCT include the following:
 - Ashton Expansion (IDFG indicated there may be 60,000 AF block not being used)
 - General area which includes: Warm River, Marysville, Boone, and Howell Ranch.
- The Study would benefit from additional mapping which shows reach-specific priorities along with a qualitative narrative.

- Bob summarized the work products that are currently under development by IDFG to support the Study which includes additional mapping to show reach-specific priorities along with a qualitative narrative.

Meeting #2 (Planning and Municipal entities):

- Municipalities are typically rich in surface-water right as a result of annexation or acquisition of irrigation lands. The amount of water available from those rights through exchange for groundwater is diminished the closer the municipality is to the River due to the groundwater model treatment of river reach gains and losses.
- Municipalities need a legal mechanism to store and recover groundwater
 - Potential alternative – evaluate the legal and administrative framework for groundwater banking
- Municipalities can prepare mitigation plans but would like to be able to develop storage/banking plans
- Because the DCM&I usage is relatively small the group indicated that it was not likely critical to the Study to refine growth projections or resulting water supply needs contained in the Draft Needs Assessment.
- Potential conservation alternatives (both already under consideration):
 - Dual pipe systems (surface water for lawn irrigation, groundwater for potable demand). Cost and O&M issues with this alternative, however, cannot eliminate this alternative based on these concerns
 - Metering
- Planning entities feel that it is easier to do recharge in eastern Idaho.

Meeting attendees had the following **comments** on summaries of the IDFG and Municipal meetings:

May 16, 2001 Meeting #1 (IDFG):

- Ashton Dam is a run-of-river project that was built for hydropower
 - 7.5 MW power production (current)
- Support investigating surface storage opportunities at the existing Felt Dam site

May 16, 2001 Meeting #2 (Planning and Municipal entities):

- What net affect would dual systems have on water supply? Some members felt that urban irrigation reductions would be best met through changes in landscaping (vs. dual-pipe systems alone).
- Other members offered feedback based on post-development reflection that Teton Valley wished they had better incorporated dual systems

Alternatives Brainstorming

Some meeting members felt that it would be valuable for the Study to better understand Fremont-Madison Irrigation District (FMID) operations. It was suggested that a site tour be scheduled and facilitated by local water resources and conservation experts (e.g., Jerry Gregg/Reclamation or Brian Sauer/Reclamation) to gain insight on operational considerations and lessons learned with conservation.

Meeting attendees continued alternatives brainstorming which included the following comments and considerations:

- Need surface storage alternative in the Teton Valley

- Recommend taking a closer look at Badger Creek
- Bitch Creek surface storage - this site has several sensitive environmental issues, specifically sensitive aquatic species, that could be mitigated for (e.g., “man-powered” fish segregator)
- Felt Dam site
- Can water stored in the Teton Valley be used for groundwater recharge west of St. Anthony
- Need to review the Teton Dam Reappraisal Working Document (Reclamation 1991) to document the cost estimate with current costs using cost indexing to use as a benchmark for other storage alternatives.
- Potential alternative – Divert Teton River flows below the confluence with Henrys Fork (pump storage project)
- Need to refine in-basin needs
 - Irrigation needs peak in the second to third year of consecutive drought – surface storage offers the most flexibility
 - FMID has some storage rights although their water rights are junior to American Falls and Jackson Lake. Additional storage would provide flexibility to meet water needs during dry cycles.

Upcoming Meetings and Agenda

- The full Workgroup meeting – Meeting 8 – scheduled for Tuesday, May 17, 2011 has been cancelled. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for June 21, 2011.

Meeting Attendees

Meeting Attendees included:

- Sara Rupp – Friends of the Teton River
- Jeff Raybould – FMID
- Dale Swenson – FMID
- LaDonna Henman – FMID
- Jerry Rigby – FMID Counsel
- Kim Ragotzkie – Henry’s Fork Foundation
- Kim Trotter – Trout Unlimited
- Del Raybould – State Representative, District 34
- Jim De Rito - Henry’s Fork Foundation
- Bob Schattin – Bureau of Reclamation
- Mark Bransom – CH2M HILL